

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 26, 2025

3:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Löki Tobin, Chair  
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair  
Senator Jesse Bjorkman  
Senator Jesse Kiehl  
Senator Mike Cronk

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 20

"An Act relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation education in public schools; relating to the duties of the Department of Education and Early Development; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 118

"An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska."

- HEARD & HELD

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 69(RLS) AM

"An Act relating to education; relating to open enrollment in public schools; relating to school and student performance reports; relating to school and district accountability; relating to charter schools; relating to an annual report for correspondence study programs; relating to the base student allocation; relating to reading proficiency incentive grants; relating to wireless telecommunications devices in public schools; relating to the duty of the legislature to pass a public education appropriation bill; relating to the duty of the governor to prepare a public education appropriation bill; establishing the Task Force on Education Funding; relating to a

report on regulation of school districts; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 20

SHORT TITLE: CPR CURRICULUM

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) GRAY-JACKSON

01/10/25	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
01/22/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25	(S)	EDC, FIN
03/26/25	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SB 118

SHORT TITLE: ADD FACULTY MEMBER UNIV BOARD OF REGENTS

SPONSOR(s): STATE AFFAIRS

03/05/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/05/25	(S)	EDC, FIN
03/26/25	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

**WITNESS REGISTER**

ELVI GRAY-JACKSON, Senator, District G  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of SB 20.

ZANDER KOTLAROV, Intern  
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided and introductory presentation for SB 20.

DOUG SCHRAGE, Chief  
Anchorage Fire Department  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 20.

JASON DOLPH, Safety Officer  
Anchorage Fire Department  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 20.

BRIAN WEBB, representing self  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 20.

LINDA IRELAND, DO  
Cardiologist  
Alaska Heart and Vascular Institute  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 20.

KRISTIN GEORGE, Executive Director  
American Heart Association Alaska  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 20.

KELLY MANNING, Deputy Director  
Division of Innovation and Education Excellence  
Department of Education and Early Development  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered an overview of the fiscal note OMB 2796 for SB 20.

MIKE COONS, representing self  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 20.

MICHAEL LEVY, representing self  
Eagle River, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 20.

JOE HAYES, Staff  
Senator Scott Kawasaki  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided the sponsor statement, introductory presentation, and sectional analysis for SB 118 on behalf of the sponsor.

JENNIFER CARROLL, Chair  
Faculty Alliance  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 118 and answered.

ANDREA DEWEES, Associate Professor  
University of Alaska Southeast

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 118.

KATIE MCCALL, Government Relations Manager  
University of Alaska  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered an overview of the fiscal note OMB 730 for SB 118.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:30:22 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Stevens, Cronk, and Chair Tobin. Senator Bjorkman and Kiehl arrived shortly thereafter.

#### **SB 20-CPR CURRICULUM**

[3:31:56 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 20 "An Act relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation education in public schools; relating to the duties of the Department of Education and Early Development; and providing for an effective date."

[3:32:12 PM](#)

ELVI GRAY-JACKSON, Senator, District G, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 20 stated this bill is the same as the bill she introduced last session with the exception that it has a zero fiscal note. She mentioned that Captain Jason Dolph with the Anchorage Fire Department brought the idea for the bill to her attention. She gave the following sponsor statement for SB 20. She explained that sudden cardiac arrest is the third leading cause of death in the United States, and immediate bystander-administered CPR can more than triple survival rates. She concluded that the bill would improve health education, prepare students for emergencies, introduce career skills, and promote a culture of readiness in Alaska schools.

[3:34:15 PM](#)

At ease.

[3:34:29 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN reconvened the meeting.

[3:34:34 PM](#)

ZANDER KOTLAROV, Intern, Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, provided an introductory presentation for SB 20. He moved to slide 2 and read the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**What is CPR? Importance of Early CPR**

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is a first aid technique to help people who suffer a cardiac arrest (their heart stops beating). It involves doing chest compressions.
- Aids in the circulation of oxygenated blood around the body to maintain the brain and vital organs until advance medical help arrives.
- If performed immediately, CPR can double or triple a victim's chances of survival.

[3:35:25 PM](#)

MR. KOTLAROV moved to slide 3, a map of the United States showing the states that require student CPR training. He discussed the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**A little background**

- Currently 40 states have a bill that requires students to have CPR training before graduating high school.
- Alabama passed a similar bill in 1984.
- Florida was the last state to adopt a similar bill in 2021.

[3:35:52 PM](#)

MR. KOTLAROV moved to slide 4, Trained Students Save Lives, and discussed the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**TRAINED STUDENTS SAVE LIVES**

- Sudden Cardiac Arrest is a leading cause of death in the US—but bystander CPR can double or triple the survival rate.
- Training students in CPR requires minimal investment in time and cost. According to the

latest science, trainees can achieve acceptable levels of CPR skills proficiency in 30 minutes or less.

- Pierson High School in Sag Harbor, NY began its CPR program in 1994. Amazingly, at least 16 lives have been saved so far because these students used their CPR skills in the real world!

[3:36:34 PM](#)

MR. KOTLAROV moved to slide 5, What Does SB 20 Do, and shared the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**What does SB 20 do?**

- It will require school districts to implement an existing program to instruct public school students on hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- The program must:
- Be based on current national, evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- Incorporate hands-on practice in addition to cognitive learning.
- Include instruction in the appropriate use of an AED (automated external defibrillator), which may be taught using video or other means if in-person instruction is not available.

MR. KOTLAROV said industrial experts are available online to share testimony in support of SB 20 and answer questions.

[3:36:55 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON stated that CPR is one of the most valuable life skills for young adults, enabling them to make a meaningful difference in emergencies. She shared that during the interim, she and her staff visited the Alaska Heart and Vascular Institute at Providence in Anchorage, where they observed the positive impact of CPR education in schools. She reported that doctors highlighted students' long-term retention of the material and stressed the need to prepare youth for life-threatening situations. She concluded by urging support for SB 20 to align Alaska with other states in providing students with essential life-saving skills.

[3:38:11 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS expressed strong support for the legislation and praised its connection to the Department of Education. He stated he did not wish to suggest changes to the bill at this time. However, he noted that requiring CPR training for university students could also be a valid consideration for future legislation.

[3:38:43 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN agreed with the bill's intent and shared a personal story of witnessing her sister-in-law perform a life-saving measure on her young nephew. She emphasized that many people across Alaska need access to critical life-saving knowledge. She noted that emergencies can happen at any time, especially to loved ones, highlighting the importance of preparedness.

[3:39:03 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN announced invited testimony on SB 20.

[3:39:17 PM](#)

DOUG SCHRAGE, Chief, Anchorage Fire Department, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 20. He said he is a former president and lifetime member of the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association. He is testifying on behalf of the Anchorage Fire Department and fire personnel across the state. He stated that hands-only CPR is essential to increasing survival rates from sudden cardiac arrest in Alaska and emphasized that even in communities with strong emergency medical services, survival remains around 50 percent due to delayed response times. He explained that closing the time gap between a cardiac event and emergency response depends on community members being trained in CPR, especially in the home where most arrests occur. He highlighted that hands-only CPR is preferred in many situations due to both psychological and scientific reasons, noting that uninterrupted chest compressions are most effective in maintaining circulation. He added that the CPR curriculum is widely available at no cost and that many fire departments are willing to support schools in delivering training. He also endorsed the inclusion of automated external defibrillator (AED) training in SB 20, noting that modern AEDs are user-friendly, often requiring no prior experience, and that training still adds important value. He concluded by expressing strong enthusiasm for the bill and urged its passage this session.

[3:44:40 PM](#)

JASON DOLPH, Safety Officer, Anchorage Fire Department, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 20. He said he

is a second-generation firefighter and 26-year emergency services veteran. He shared his extensive background, including serving as a safety officer with the Anchorage Fire Department, being a certified EMT and CPR instructor, and operating a CPR training business. He emphasized the critical need for immediate CPR during sudden cardiac arrest, citing data showing an 81 percent increase in survival when CPR is performed within two minutes. He explained that CPR can double or triple survival chances and that early intervention—especially by bystanders—is essential to bridging the response time gap before emergency crews arrive.

[3:47:02 PM](#)

MR. DOLPH shared a personal account of his first 911 call involving a cardiac arrest, describing the helplessness of untrained family members present at the scene and stressing how training could have made a difference. He explained that only about 40 percent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims receive CPR from bystanders, largely because adults often lack training and time to attend classes unless required for work. He argued that integrating CPR into schools addresses this gap by reaching students early, normalizing life-saving skills, and instilling confidence through peer learning.

[3:49:48 PM](#)

MR. DOLPH cited national stories of youth successfully saving lives with CPR and research supporting that children as young as nine can effectively learn the technique. He said the ultimate goal is to create a generation of lifesaving citizens with a lifelong commitment to cardiac awareness. He compared the death toll from sudden cardiac arrest to the equivalent of seven daily commercial plane crashes and asked lawmakers to consider whether such numbers would prompt urgent action. He concluded by affirming his support for education, but stressed that in an emergency, CPR is the only knowledge powerful enough to save a life, and SB 20 provides that essential opportunity.

[3:53:48 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS stated that he has known Mr. Dolph's father, the fire chief in Kodiak, for approximately 50 years and expressed appreciation for his son's accomplishments. He shared that he had known Mr. Jason Dolph since childhood and commended him for becoming a respected and responsible adult. He thanked him for his contributions to public safety and CPR advocacy.

[3:54:30 PM](#)

BRIAN WEBB, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 20. He said he is a paramedic with over 46 years of experience in Alaska EMS and EMS education, testified in strong support of SB 20. He shared that CPR in schools has been a long-standing goal for the EMS community since 2005, and he expressed encouragement at the simplicity and progress of the current bill. He explained that rural Alaska faces long EMS response times and a persistent lack of bystander CPR, which severely impacts cardiac arrest survival. He stated that the most critical and changeable factor in the state's chain of survival is bystander CPR and emphasized that every minute without CPR reduces survival chances by 10 percent.

[3:55:50 PM](#)

MR. WEBER addressed previous concerns about cost and class time by noting that SB 20 only requires skill exposure—not full certification—and that free or low-cost programs and equipment are now available. He added that effective CPR can be taught in 30 minutes or less, making it a manageable addition to school programs. He argued that the bill not only provides life-saving skills but also strengthens local EMS connections and may help build Alaska's future EMS workforce. He shared that his own career was inspired by a school CPR class taught by Norm Miller, Alaska's first licensed paramedic, and noted that communities like Hollis, Hydaburg and Klawock have already seen success with school-based CPR training led by local EMS. He concluded by citing a recent example in Juneau where a student saved his father's life just two weeks after a school CPR class, and urged support for SB 20 as a straightforward, life-saving measure.

[3:58:53 PM](#)

LINDA IRELAND, DO, Cardiologist, Alaska Heart and Vascular Institute, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 20. She said she serves as the current Governor of the Alaska Chapter of the American Cardiac College of Cardiology and has been a cardiologist for 20 years. She emphasized that 70 percent of cardiac arrests occur in the home, not in public venues, making it crucial for both adults and children to know CPR. She stated that delayed bystander CPR often results in poor outcomes before patients reach the emergency room and that immediate action is essential, as survival decreases by 10 percent for every minute CPR is not performed. She shared two examples: one, a 50-year-old woman who survived a sudden cardiac arrest in the stands during a volleyball game thanks to immediate CPR and AED use by a nurse; and another, a local student whose CPR was delayed due to misidentification of cardiac arrest symptoms as a seizure. She explained that CPR education also teaches students

to recognize emergencies and call 911 effectively. She described her ongoing work teaching hands-only CPR to youth through the Boys and Girls Clubs in Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, and remote communities such as Nome and Kotzebue, supported by a grant from the American College of Cardiology. She stated that SB 20 would ensure all students graduate with the skills to respond in emergencies and help close the CPR knowledge gap in Alaska. She concluded by urging passage of SB 20, noting that CPR education empowers students to act as multipliers by sharing their skills with family members and expanding life-saving awareness within communities.

[4:03:51 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL referenced written testimony expressing concern that hands-only CPR may not provide adequate oxygenation or prevent CO<sub>2</sub> buildup without rescue breaths. He asked for clarification on the medical evidence comparing hands-only CPR to traditional CPR with rescue breathing.

[4:04:40 PM](#)

DR. IRELAND explained that including rescue breaths in CPR often discourages people from participating in training. She acknowledged that CO<sub>2</sub> levels can rise without rescue breaths but emphasized that chest compressions alone have been proven effective within the critical 10-minute window before EMS arrives, particularly for neurological outcomes. She noted that other EMS professionals could further address the issue.

[4:05:24 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS noted the bill's reference to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and asked for clarification on how AED use compares to hands-only CPR, especially given earlier comments favoring hands-only CPR.

DR. IRELAND stated that AED use is the next step in the life-saving process after calling EMS and performing CPR. She emphasized that AED application significantly increases survival chances. She noted that modern AEDs are user-friendly and often come with training devices for practice. She agreed that AEDs are critically important and should be incorporated alongside CPR education.

[4:07:09 PM](#)

KRISTIN GEORGE, Executive Director, American Heart Association Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 20 and said the organization is proud to support the legislation. She explained that cardiac arrest, unlike a heart attack, results

from an electrical malfunction that stops the heart's pumping function. She stated that nearly 90 percent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims do not survive, but early CPR can double or triple survival rates. She emphasized that hands-only CPR can be taught in a single class period using accessible resources and that training students equips them to provide immediate aid until EMS arrives. She urged swift passage of SB 20, noting that over 40 states already require CPR training for graduation and that Alaska must not wait another year to join them.

[4:09:08 PM](#)

KELLY MANNING, Deputy Director, Division of Innovation and Education Excellence, Department of Education and Early Development, Juneau, Alaska, offered an overview of the fiscal note OMB 2796 for SB 20. She stated that the bill carries a zero fiscal note. She explained that the Department will develop regulations to guide local curriculum adoption as required by statute and does not anticipate any additional costs at this time.

[4:10:27 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN opened public testimony on SB 20.

[4:10:47 PM](#)

MIKE COONS, representing self, Wasilla, Alaska, testified in opposition to SB 20. He said he is a retired paramedic with 22 years of experience. He expressed strong opposition to SB 20's exclusive focus on hands-only CPR. He stated that while he has taught CPR and advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) and performed life-saving interventions, hands-only CPR does little to remove carbon dioxide or deliver oxygen—both critical to sustaining life. He acknowledged that hands-only CPR may be effective in the first few minutes after collapse, but stressed that without oxygen, brain damage begins within four minutes. He argued that students should be trained in full CPR, including rescue breathing, and urged the legislature to let schools decide which method to teach to maximize survival chances.

[4:13:43 PM](#)

MICHAEL LEVY, representing self, Eagle River, Alaska, testified in support of SB 20. He said he has been an emergency physician in Alaska since 1989 and medical director for the Anchorage Fire Department and other EMS agencies. He expressed frustration that Alaska remains one of the few states without a CPR education requirement, despite years of advocacy. He stated that 519 Alaskans experienced cardiac arrest in 2023, with only 54 discharged with good neurological function, and emphasized that

early bystander CPR significantly increases survival rates. He described school-based CPR training as a low-cost, high-impact intervention that empowers students, strengthens communities, and enhances public safety.

[4:15:37 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN closed public testimony on SB 20.

[4:15:53 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN said she received full CPR certification during high school along with other requirements. She asked whether SB 20 prohibits any school from offering additional training to students.

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON said she did not know the answer to the question.

[4:16:16 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN opined that SB 20 does not say schools cannot offer more training because it is just the minimum required. She asked whether schools could offer more training.

[4:16:25 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON stated she was unsure and therefore did not care to respond. She said she would find the answer and report back to the committee members.

CHAIR TOBIN stated that having an answer would address concerns mentioned by Mr. Coons.

[4:16:43 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN held SB 20 in committee.

[4:16:53 PM](#)

At ease.

**SB 118-ADD FACULTY MEMBER UNIV BOARD OF REGENTS**

[4:18:08 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 118 "An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska."

[4:18:30 PM](#)

JOE HAYES, Staff, Senator Scott Kawasaki, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, provided the sponsor statement, introductory presentation, and sectional analysis for SB 118 on behalf of the sponsor.

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Senate Bill 118**  
**Sponsor Statement**  
**"An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the**  
**University of Alaska."**

The University of Alaska has a mission to inspire learning, advance and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, and emphasize the North and its diverse peoples. The University of Alaska Board of Regents is an eleven-member board responsible with crafting policy and fulfilling the University's mission. Senate Bill 118 would add one tenured faculty member to the Board of Regents for a two-year term after a thorough selection process. The addition of a faculty member would help the Board of Regents advance its mission and provide representation to this key stakeholder group.

Currently, there are six states that require one or more faculty regents to be a voting member of their University Board of Regents. These states believe that the interests of the institution are best served when a faculty regent is granted voting representation. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities has stated that the University of Alaska system should "create a space for inclusive dialogue as the Board of Regents deliberates on the future of the University of Alaska System." One way to ensure that this inclusive dialogue occurs through fiscal stressors and organizational challenges is through the addition of a seat for a qualified faculty regent.

Our University of Alaska has navigated the most challenging of fiscal and social challenges over the last decade. Through sweeping budget cuts, programmatic changes and challenges, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Regents has been in the driver's seat making the tough decisions for the University's future. Adding one faculty member would provide better representation to this important constituency, allow our University to provide faculty the same parity and respect currently granted to students as a critical stakeholder group, and create greater dialog on the Board when making decisions for years to come.

Please join me in supporting SB 118 so the University of Alaska can make the most informed decisions possible and better fulfill their mission of inspiring learning and disseminating knowledge.

[4:21:30 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 2, University of Alaska Board of Regents Membership and began the presentation for SB 118, and discussed the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

#### **University of Alaska Board of Regents Membership**

- 10 Regents serve 8 -year terms
- 1 Student regent:
  - Serves a 2-year term
  - Has full board powers
  - Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA
  - 2 students are elected by their campus and then a nominee is selected by the Governor
- Current Role of Faculty with the BOR:
  - Faculty Alliance makes a report at each BOR meeting
  - Able to be called on to answer questions
  - Does not have full speaking rights as a Regent

[4:22:12 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 3, State by State Comparison, a map depicting State Board of Regents Membership for each US state. He said 24 state university systems have student regents and six of those 24 also have faculty regents.

[4:22:27 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 4, Examples: Oregon, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, and provided the following information:

[Original punctuation provided.]

#### **Examples:**

**Oregon, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia**

**Oregon State University and University of Oregon**

Trustees Board has 15 members, including 11 at-large members, 1 faculty member, 1 student member, and 1 staff member all appointed by the Governor.

### **Pennsylvania State University**

Trustee Board has 38 Members, including 6 at-large members, 9 alumni-elected members, and 6 agriculture members. In addition, the Board elects 6 members-one of which is a faculty member.

### **West Virginia University**

Board of Governors has 17 members, with 13 at-large members, 2 faculty members, 1 student member, and 1 staff member.

[4:22:46 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 5, and continued with examples of university systems for Florida, Kentucky, and Tennessee:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Examples: Florida, Kentucky, and Tennessee

### **State University system of Florida**

17 members total including 14 at-large members appointed by the Governor, the Chair of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, the Commissioner of Education, and the Chair of the Florida Student Association.

### **Kentucky State University**

11 voting members, including 8 at-large members, 1 faculty and 1 staff regent elected by their respective governing councils, and 1 student regent.

### **Tennessee University System**

18 members total, including 12 at-large members, 1 faculty member, 1 student, and 4 ex-officio members.

[4:22:56 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 6, University of Alaska Faculty Representation Act, and discussed how the act would work in Alaska. He addressed the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**University of Alaska Faculty Representation Act  
How It Works**

- Increases the number of Regents from 11 to 12
- 2 nominees from the Faculty Senate of each of the three main campuses are put forward
- Governor selects one appointee, subject to confirmation by the Legislature
- Faculty must be a tenured, full -time, UA employee
- Serves a 2 -year term
- Has the full powers of a regent for voting, travel, and entering executive session
- Majority vote needed for a motion of the Board to carry

[4:23:34 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 7, University of Alaska System, a map of Alaska with the location of University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) campuses in three corresponding font colors:

**University of Alaska Statewide (Administration)**

**UAA (Green)**

Kodiak College  
Kenai Peninsula College  
Kachemak Bay Campus  
Military Programs  
Anchorage Campus  
Chugiak-Eagle River Campus  
Matanuska Susitna Campus  
Prince William Sound C.C.

**UAF (Blue)**

Bristol Bay Campus  
Kuskokwim Campus  
Northwest Campus  
Chukchi Campus

Interior-Aleutians Campus  
Fairbanks Campus  
College of Rural and Community Development  
Community and Technical College

**UAS (Purple)**

Juneau Campus  
Sitka Campus  
Ketchikan Campus

[4:23:53 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 8, UA System Governance Flow Chart. He said the flow chart shows how the Faculty Senates work to get the Faculty Alliance member who then goes to the Board of Regents to speak. It shows how the governance groups for the students work through the Coalition of Student Leaders, and the councils for staff work through Staff Alliance.

[4:24:16 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 9, Benefits of a Faculty Regent, and mentioned the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Benefits of a Faculty Regent**

- More than a "seat at the table"
- Faculty can enter executive session, travel for Board meetings, and can vote
- Improves the ability for faculty to provide stakeholder interest
- Held to a standard of professionalism -they can recuse themselves from a conflicted vote
- Ensures that faculty, like students, are given a voting interest in University affairs

[4:25:12 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS expressed strong support for the proposal, stating it is long overdue. He noted that students already serve as voting members on both the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents and adding a faculty member makes sense given their important role. He appreciated the explanation of the faculty selection process. He asked whether there has been consideration of also adding a staff member to the Board of Regents.

[4:25:47 PM](#)

MR. HAYES responded that adding a staff member to the Board of Regents has not been considered at this time. He noted that the board structure has not changed in 50 years and that the current effort focuses on establishing a faculty regent, an initiative that has been pursued for about a decade. He stated that adding a staff member could be considered in the future, depending on how the faculty regent proposal progresses.

[4:26:11 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL noted that the standard term for a regent is eight years and acknowledged the rationale for limiting a student regent's term to two years due to the nature of student enrollment. He questioned why the bill proposes only a two-year term for a tenured faculty member, given their long-term presence and experience within the university system.

[4:26:49 PM](#)

MR. HAYES explained that Senator Kawasaki proposed a two-year term to allow more faculty members across the three Major Administrative Units (MAUs) to serve as regents. He stated that shorter terms would increase opportunities for participation and bring a broader range of expertise and perspectives to the Board over time.

[4:27:22 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS asked for clarification regarding whether serving a two-year term would prevent the faculty regent from being reappointed.

MR. HAYES responded that, as written, the bill does not prohibit reappointment. He stated that the governor would not be restricted from reappointing a faculty regent if they chose to do so.

[4:27:47 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN stated that SB 118, page 2, line 9, says each Regent serves until a successor is appointed and qualifies. She stated her belief that this allows for the flexibility that Mr. Hayes stated.

[4:27:58 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated that one benefit of longer regent terms is the opportunity to learn both the university system and the board's internal processes, which enhances effectiveness. He compared this to legislators, who often become more effective after a few years in office. He expressed interest in whether

the sponsor would consider a longer term for faculty regents than the current two-year proposal, which matches the student regent term.

[4:28:56 PM](#)

MR. HAYES said he would share the suggestion with the bill sponsor.

[4:29:04 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked a procedural question regarding the appointment process, noting that the bill places limitations on whom the governor may appoint. He questioned whether a person could hold tenure at more than one major academic unit (MAU) and potentially fill two slots.

[4:29:43 PM](#)

MR. HAYES stated his belief that under the current University of Alaska system, a faculty member cannot hold tenure at more than one campus.

SENATOR STEVENS stated that tenure is tenure throughout the UA system.

[4:30:10 PM](#)

MR. HAYES deferred the question.

[4:30:24 PM](#)

JENNIFER CARROLL, Chair, Faculty Alliance, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska, answered questions on SB 118. She said no, a professor cannot have tenure at more than one of the universities as they are separately accredited. She stated her belief that affiliation is possible, but tenure rests at the university of main employment.

[4:31:09 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN announced invited testimony on SB 118.

[4:31:30 PM](#)

ANDREA DEWEES, Associate Professor, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 118. She stated that she is a professor, an alumna of the University of Alaska (UA) system, and an elected vice president of United Academics, the faculty union. She emphasized her deep roots in Alaska and her long-standing role at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) since 2012. She strongly supported the idea of adding a faculty regent to the Board of Regents, asserting that faculty perspectives are essential to informed decision-making,

especially given the unique challenges faced during the pandemic and budget cuts from 2019-2020.

[4:32:19 PM](#)

MS. DEWEES explained that faculty have critical insights into teaching, research, accreditation, and broader educational trends, and that their active involvement in university and community life would benefit board deliberations. She noted that faculty consistently put students first, often prioritizing student needs over their own. She supported the inclusion of a faculty regent alongside the student regent to strengthen shared governance and provide timely, expert input.

MS. DEWEES acknowledged some concerns raised by colleagues regarding the impact of serving as a regent on their teaching and research responsibilities. She suggested that a two-year term, as proposed, could help balance those demands and allow for equitable rotation among campuses.

[4:34:51 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS questioned the standards required for current Regents appointed by the governor, recalling at least one instance where an appointee had no university background or understanding of how a university operates. He emphasized the value of having someone from within the university system serve on the board, noting that a faculty regent would be just one voice among many, not a dominant influence. He asked for clarification on whether there are any formal requirements for board membership, such as being a college graduate or having academic experience.

[4:35:34 PM](#)

MR. HAYES confirmed that there are no formal qualifications required to serve as a regent. He stated that appointments are made at the governor's discretion and must be confirmed by the legislature.

[4:36:05 PM](#)

JENNIFER CARROLL, Chair Faculty Alliance, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 118 and answered questions. She said she is an Associate Professor of Rural Development in the Department of Alaska Native Studies and World Development at the University of Alaska Southeast.

[4:40:18 PM](#)

MS. CARROL stated that faculty from all three universities have supported the faculty regent proposal for some time. She focused

her testimony on her experience as Chair of the Faculty Alliance, the system-level body for faculty shared governance composed of faculty senate leadership from each university. As Chair, she has attended all public Board of Regents meetings and committee meetings this academic year and raised two key points: the need for consistent input on academics, and the distinction between shared governance and the role of a faculty regent.

MS. CARROL explained that while her relationship with the board has been constructive, her input as Alliance Chair is limited to after-the-fact consultation, which she described as "consultation theater" rather than true collaboration. She frequently had to prompt the board to consider educational issues and the role of faculty in policy decisions. She cited the board's recent work with consultants on a systemwide attainment framework that failed to incorporate faculty input or address the core role of education.

MS. CARROL emphasized that the Alliance Chair represents both faculty governance and academics, but a faculty regent would focus solely on educational policy and bring that perspective earlier into board discussions. She also highlighted the issue of continuity, noting that the Alliance Chair rotates annually, which limits relationship-building with board members. A two-year term for a faculty regent, as proposed, would strengthen long-term engagement. She concluded by expressing strong support for the bill and thanked the committee for considering it.

[4:41:34 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked what exactly does shared governance govern within the university system.

MS. CARROL explained that each university has a Faculty Senate with formal bylaws and a structured governance process. Faculty senators are elected from their respective academic units, and each senate includes leadership roles such as president, president-elect, and past president, as well as committees. She described the process as organized and deliberative, similar to legislative procedure, where issues are discussed in committees and brought forward as motions for vote.

MS. CARROL noted that some decisions require administrative approval, and others may be elevated to the Faculty Alliance, which represents systemwide faculty interests. The Alliance addresses a wide range of issues, including academics and topics like graduate student funding. She emphasized that the Alliance Chair must consider all constituent perspectives, which can

limit the ability to speak freely as an individual faculty member. She clarified that the Alliance Chair role is not designed to be a speaking participant in board deliberations, often limited to providing brief reports and speaking only when invited, which differs significantly from the role envisioned for a faculty regent.

[4:44:33 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated that he needed a more basic explanation of what shared governance actually governs. He acknowledged that the earlier description focused on processes and committees, but he was looking for a clearer understanding of the substance—what decisions or areas are actually covered by shared governance. He noted that faculty involvement in both shared governance and the proposed faculty regent role could be seen cynically as seeking “two bites at the apple,” and admitted he lacked sufficient understanding to assess that critique.

[4:45:30 PM](#)

MS. CARROL explained that at many universities, faculty hold primary responsibility over academic matters, especially curriculum and curricular processes. Faculty governance typically controls how academic programs are developed, reviewed, and maintained. In other areas, such as advising policies, there is shared responsibility with administration. Some issues, like parking policies, fall entirely under administrative control, with faculty input limited to recommendations or resolutions.

MS. CARROL disagreed with the idea that having both shared governance and a faculty regent amounts to “two bites at the apple.” She clarified that the Faculty Alliance Chair attends Board of Regents meetings to provide updates and limited input, often after decisions have already been made. In contrast, a faculty regent would serve as a full board member and offer a deeper, ongoing academic perspective—particularly on curriculum, educational quality, and the faculty-student relationship. She emphasized that while both roles may touch on similar topics, the scope and influence of each are fundamentally different.

[4:48:16 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN asked whether, based on current knowledge and experience, there are any tenured, full-time faculty at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), or University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) who do not live near their associated campuses or who reside in locations extremely far from them.

[4:48:40 PM](#)

MS. CARROL replied yes.

CHAIR TOBIN asked for examples.

[4:48:49 PM](#)

MS. CARROL requested clarification of "far from." She mentioned a person living in Nome where there is a little campus.

SENATOR STEVENS mentioned there is a very small campus in Dillingham.

CHAIR TOBIN asked whether the estimated \$1,000 travel cost in the fiscal note reflects the average travel expense for a tenured faculty member, selected by the governor, to serve on the Board of Regents and travel to each Board of Regents meeting.

[4:49:39 PM](#)

MS. CARROL stated that the \$1,000 average travel seemed reasonable. She stated that although some tenured faculty live in rural Alaska, they represent a small minority. She expected most selected faculty would likely travel from Fairbanks, Anchorage, or Juneau.

[4:50:17 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN asked Ms. McCall to explain the basis for the \$1,000 travel cost assumption in the fiscal note. She acknowledged that the figure was averaged across nine members but emphasized that Board of Regents members can come from any location in Alaska. She requested clarification on how that variability was factored into the fiscal note's development.

[4:50:58 PM](#)

KATIE MCCALL, Government Relations Manager, University of Alaska, Juneau, Alaska, offered an overview of the fiscal note OMB 730 for SB 118, appropriation to the University of Alaska. She stated that the estimated fiscal impact to the university from SB 118 is a \$4,000 annual increase in travel costs due to the addition of a 12th member to the Board of Regents. She explained that the cost estimate, shown on page one of the fiscal note, uses unrestricted general funds (UGF) starting in FY 26 and continuing annually. The \$1,000 per-meeting estimate is based on four regular meetings held in February, May, September, and November, with the assumption that not all regents travel to every meeting. She noted that in FY 24, the total board travel cost was \$36,000, which was divided by nine

members to estimate the \$4,000 annual increase; regents receive no compensation, but they are reimbursed for per diem and travel.

[4:53:19 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN noted time constraints but stated she would follow up later. She expressed interest in understanding where current regents are flying from. She questioned whether using only one year of data provides an accurate reflection of average travel costs, given the varying locations of regents.

MS. MCCALL said she would be happy to follow up.

[4:53:45 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN opened public testimony on SB 118; finding none, she closed public testimony.

[4:54:12 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN held SB 118 in committee.

[4:54:54 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Tobin adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 4:54 p.m.